

Famous American Flags

Banners of Our Country, Rich in History and Honor—Flags Which Flew in the Revolution, the War of 1812, the Mexican War, the Civil War and the Spanish-American War. Many Are Tattered and Torn, but They Are Authentic — Peary's Flag Which Flew at the Top of the World.

THOUGH as yet the baby of nations, Uncle Sam has the pride of which he has reason to be proud. Most of them are in the possession of the government, but a few are owned by individuals or army posts.

One of the most kept at the statehouse at Annapolis, Md., was carried by the Maryland troops during the war of the American revolution, and is made in accordance with the act of Congress, June 14, 1777. It is positively known to have been the regimental flag of the 2d Maryland Regiment, commanded by Col. John Eager Howard, at the battle of Cowpens, S. C., in January, 1778, in which fight it was held by William Bachelor. Bachelor was sent home to Baltimore wounded and took his flag with him.

After Bachelor's death in March, 1781, the flag remained in his family, and when the British invaded Maryland in 1814 this same flag was carried by William Bachelor's son, in the battle of North Point, as a banner for the 27th Maryland Regiment. This William Bachelor died in 1885. The flag in 1907 was presented to the state of Maryland and has since then resided in its capital building at Annapolis.

Another famous banner is the battle flag of Commander Oliver Hazard Perry, the same one which flew successfully on the decks of the flagships the Niagara and the Lawrence, in the battle of Lake Erie, September, 1813. This flag had been made at Perry's express command, but at the suggestion of Purser Hamilton, and the words it bore, "Don't Give Up the Ship," were the last uttered by Capt. Lawrence, killed in the fight in June, 1813, between the English and American forces. These words have erroneously been attributed to Perry, but are, in fact, an adoption of Lawrence's sentiment to Perry's flag. The banner is a hunting of one solid color bearing its famous motto in large letters across its face, and is now kept at the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis.

In the same chamber at the academy is a gorgeous royal British standard which was captured from the parliament house when the capital of Canada fell in 1813, into American hands. It is a magnificent ensign with five quarterings, all in radiant tones, the heraldic blazonry being such as was used in the time of George III. In one corner is a red lion poised in air, to denote Scotland; in another is the golden harp of Ireland; two other quarters contain three golden rampant lions for England, while in the central quartering is a combination of the arms of Saxony, Hanover, Brunswick and Lüneburg, with some emblems of the Holy Roman Empire.

In the National Museum in Washington is the real Star Spangled Banner, the same flag which floated over Fort McHenry in September, 1814, when it was attacked by the British, and the one around which Key wrote his immortal poem. Being thirty-six by twenty-six feet, it will hang from the second story of a building to the first floor. In spite of time, it is well preserved, and the stars and stripes which "gleamed through the perilous fight" are still plainly to be seen. Mexican trophies are to be seen at the Naval Academy. These flags are all unique in their history, bearing the can of standing on a cactus, with a snake in its mouth. There are several of this war, one of them being the flag captured by Gen. Winfield Scott and Commodore Matthew Perry at the fall of Vera Cruz in 1847.

In the ante-chamber to the room of the Secretary of War, in Washington, is the famous flag which flew over Fort Sumter in April, 1861, when it was fired on by the Confederate batteries. This was the shot which opened the great war between the states.

The flag of the Merrimac is now owned by the family of the late Capt. Beverly Littlepage, formerly of Washington.

Another flag of the Merrimac is in the possession of Mr. C. F. Gunther of Chicago; this was the one first raised, but was shot away. The flag owned by the Littlepages is the second one run up.

In the rooms of the Stevenson Post at Roxbury, Mass., is preserved one of the strangest banners the world has ever seen. In a tobacco factory in Richmond in civil war times many Union soldiers were prisoners, among them a Timothy J. Regan. Regan conceived the idea of making a flag of Union Stars and Stripes even in the close confinement of their prison. There were about twenty men, and they secretly got together the material.

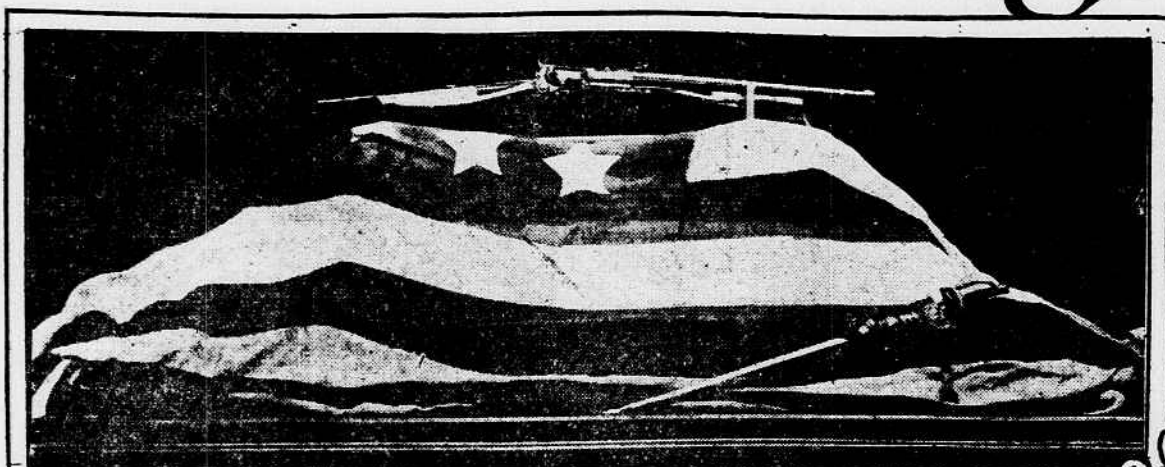
A flannel shirt made the blue ground, a shirt of white cotton furnished the white stars, and goods were bought sufficient to make the red and white stripes. In hiding, they worked at their task till at last it was finished. It was thrown to the wind once in a place which was sheltered from the view of the guards, then torn into strips and divided among the men. After the war, Regan, by persistent effort, was able to get together all the pieces and had them sewn again into a flag, which is now at Roxbury.

The flag of the Maine, the ship whose sinking precipitated the Spanish-American war in 1898, is kept at Annapolis. Nearby are banners captured by Dewey at Manila from the Spanish, as well as trophies of the battle of Santiago.

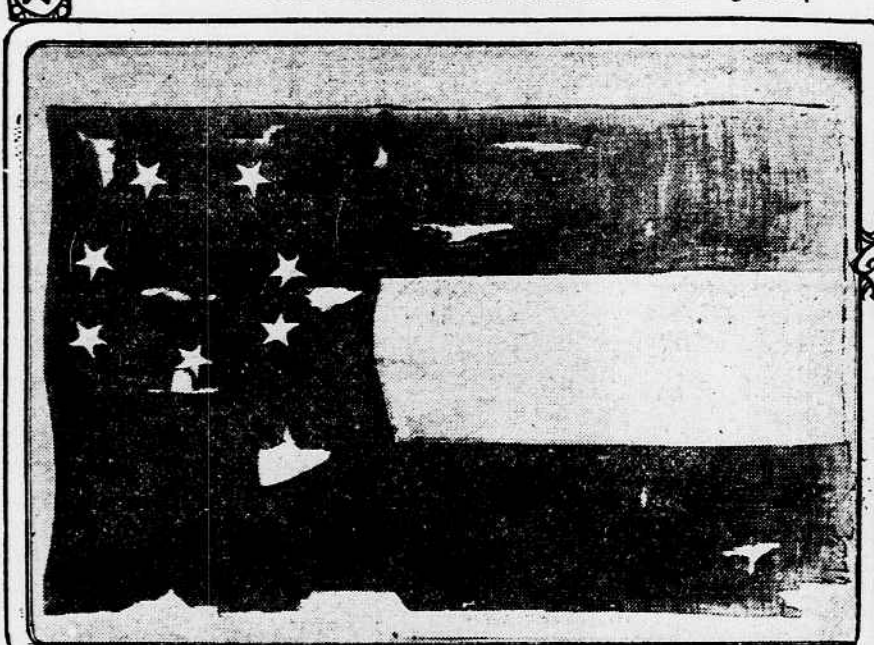
The banner which floated over the north pole, raised there April 6, 1909, by Commander Robert E. Peary, now lies for safekeeping in the vaults of a safe deposit company in Washington. It was made by Mrs. Peary, the stars being worked in silk embroidery. It was flown in the wind on the shores of the polar sea for more than a fourth of its circumference. The bits of white with which it is dotted indicate the fragments worn, the explorer left with at the starting point of the dash for the pole—Cape Columbia—five bits are records at different places in his journey.

Some were deposited at Cape in the ice of Peary's Farthest North, in 1906, and one is yet in the point of land on earth; one was left at Cape Thomas Hubbard, another at the starting point of the dash for the pole—Cape Columbia—five bits are records at different places in his journey.

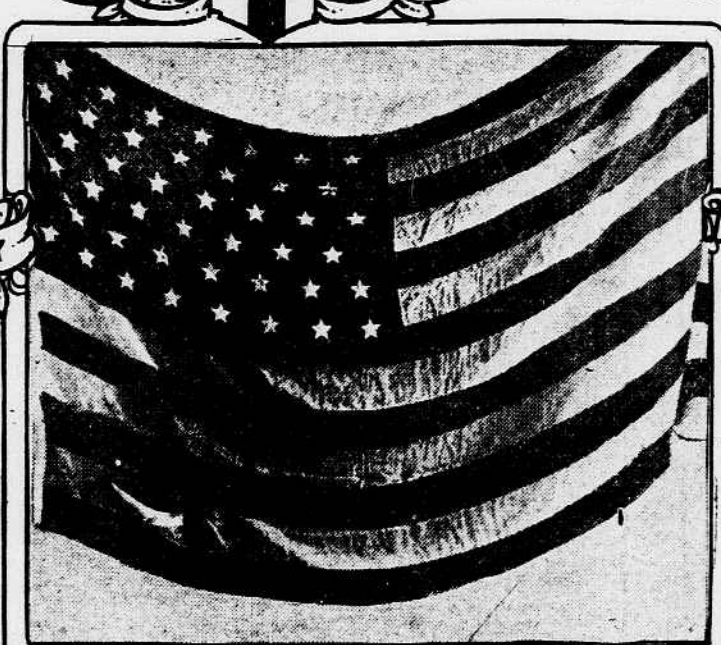
The oldest flag in the National Museum at Washington, is the first



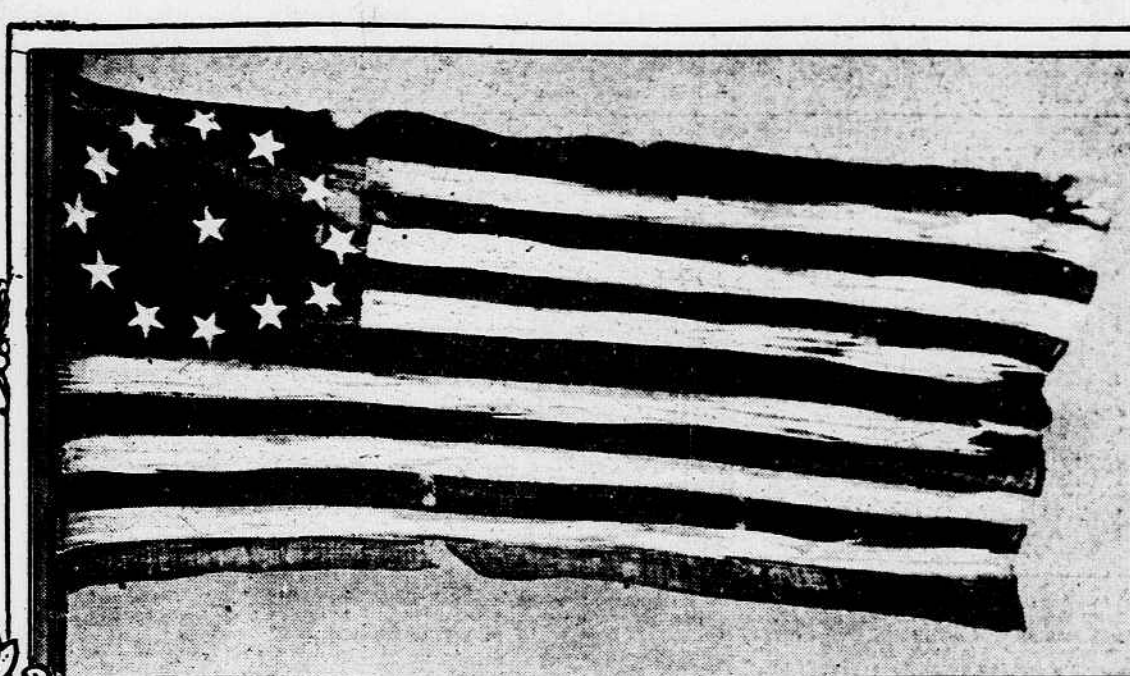
FORT MOULTRIE GARRISON FLAG



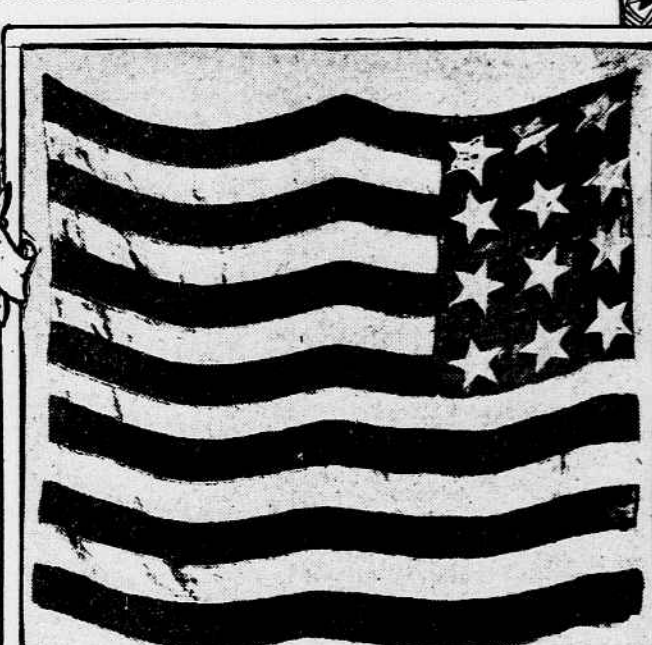
FLAG OF THE MERRIMAC, THE FIRST IRON CLAD EVER BUILT.



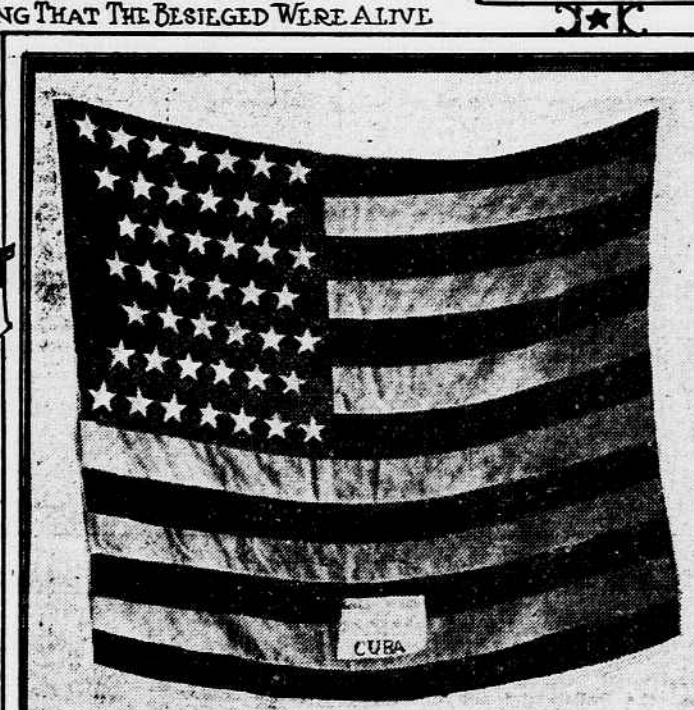
THIS FLAG WAS FIRST SIGNAL TO THE ALLIED FORCES ON ENTERING PEKING THAT THE BESIEGED WERE ALIVE



THIS FLAG WAS MADE ACCORDING TO ACT CONGRESS JUNE 14 1777.



THE FAMOUS "STARRY FLAG" OF JOHN PAUL JONES



FIRST U.S. FLAG TO BE HOISTED IN CUBA



FLAG WHICH WAS RAISED AT NORTH POLE BY ADMIRAL PEARY TAKEN ESPECIALLY FOR THIS ARTICLE

As well as trophies of the battle of Santiago.

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United States flag of which there is authentic record. This is the banner of John Paul Jones. On the very day the law was enacted establishing a national flag for the United States of America, June 14, 1777, Congress appointed John Paul Jones, who was commander of the Ranger. History does not relate, with authority, the exact date of the making of the Ranger's flag, but it must have been very soon after the congressional enactment, because the War Department states that "The ship Ranger, bearing the Stars and Stripes and commanded by Capt. Paul Jones, arrived at a French port about December 1, 1777, and her flag received, on February 14, 1778, the first salute ever paid to an American flag by foreign naval vessels."

Later, Paul Jones set his loved ensign high above the Bon Homme Richard and it waved triumphantly over many a fierce encounter with the foes of the new country. The most notable of these was when it came in contact with the British ship Serapis in 1779. These went down. Commander Jones was rescued his precious "starry flag" and hoisted it over the captured Serapis, bringing it home covered with honor.

The museum authorities believe this to be the first American flag that came into existence after the enactment of Congress. As evidence of the theory they point to the twelve stars instead of thirteen. Had this flag had an official predecessor the number of stars would hardly have occurred.

This historic standard, kept intact by long and loving care, shows its age in much-frayed edges and worn patches.

The twelve stars, arranged in three parallel perpendicular rows, still stand out stanchly on their unstable foundation, for the blue field and the thirteen red and white stripes have grown pathetically threadbare.

The National Museum contains a collection of remnants of flags that participated in naval engagements from the time of the revolutionary war to the war with Mexico; also those of foreign vessels of war captured by the navy during those periods. This display of fragments is quite interesting. It was collected by Peter Force of Washington, and presented by him to the Library of Congress, which transferred it to the National Museum.

Among these remnants is a piece of the British flag of Laurens, used during her encounter with the Constitution, and of the Java, won by the same commander. An American was a fragment of the flag of the Algerine brig Zoula, captured under Decatur.

A division of the museum's flag collection relates to the civil war, and the most interesting of these is the garrison flag of Fort Moultrie, in Charleston harbor, S. C., which was lowered December 26, 1860, when Maj. Robert Anderson, 1st United States Artillery, moved his forces to Fort Sumter. The flag was secured by his second in command, Capt. Abner Doubleday, and remained in his possession until presented to the Smithsonian Institution at Washington.

In the National Museum also is the United States flag raised in New Orleans by the volunteer flag committee after the occupation in 1862. This was the first Union flag raised by citizens of any of the Confederate states after the commencement of hostilities. Here, too, is the flag of the United States ship Kearsarge, in use at the time of the surrender of the Confederate cruiser Alabama, also the first United States flag raised in Richmond after the surrender. This was used as headquarters flag by Gen. E. O. C. Ord, U. S. A., when he took possession of the city.

The history of our war with Spain is illustrated at the National Museum by a series of flags of picturesque interest. There is here the Spanish garrison flag used at Fort San Cristobal, San Juan, Porto Rico, during the entire war, which floated over the fort during the bombardment by the American fleet, May 12, 1898. There is, too, the flag lowered from the customhouse at the plaza, Ponce, Porto Rico, when it surrendered to the United States. The yellow stripes in this flag were painted red to give it a chance to escape identification. Another Spanish flag here was taken from the trenches before Santiago, and still another is a guidon used by Spanish Infantry at Porto Rico. The museum is also custodian of the pennant flown by Admiral Schley on the Brooklyn during the battle of Santiago.

The United States Marine Corps has a number of flags of vital import. It is proud of its trophies, and well it may be, for it was foremost in winning them. The Marine Corps possesses the first American flag under fire in Cuba. This flag was raised by the marine battalion, commanding the 10th of June, 1898, and flew during the hundred hours of continuous fighting by the marines at that point. After its use in this engagement it was hauled down and sent to headquarters at Washington.

Another noteworthy flag belonging to the corps is the signal flag used by Sergt. Quick at the battle of Cusco. During the engagement the fleet stationed in the bay, while firing on the enemy, was seriously endangered by unseen marines on land, who already had the Spaniards surrounded. A volunteer was requested to go out and signal the fleet to stop firing. Sergt. Quick immediately responded, and in full view of the enemy stood and waved the signal flag. He was shot in the chest, but he received a medal and honorable mention.

Among some later flags to come into possession of the Marine Corps is the large United States flag used by the marines during the siege of the legation in Peking at the time of the Boxer riots. It may be recalled that the guard of the legation served in Peking was their post flag, and it was planted on the Tartar city wall, where it was hoisted by the Chinese. It was hoisted on the ruins of the Imperial Chien Men as a signal to the allied forces, and it has the honor of being the signal flag which saved the lives of the Chinese men who were still living. The flag shows its hard usage at the hands of the Chinese when they attacked the city. This is a large pennant-shaped affair of turkey red, with English and Chinese characters in the center.

Mrs. John Pickersgill, Baltimore Woman, Made the Star Spangled Banner



HOUSE IN WHICH THE "STAR SPANGLED BANNER" WAS MADE.

THE making of the first American flag is a subject of national knowledge and patriotic sentiment, the incidents connected with the creation of the flag which inspired the writing of "The Star Spangled Banner" are less widely known, although the interesting facts have been told to the present generation by those who actually took part in the making of that honorable banner.

The great post flag, now the property of the National Museum, and admirably displayed there in a glass case against the wall of its main hall, was ordered for Fort McHenry.

Henry, the chief post of defense for Baltimore, in a hurry. The woman to whom the order was given was Mrs. John Pickersgill, a resident of the city. She knew her business, having previously made flags of different sizes for use in her home town.

Appreciating the fact that the British, then pelting at the gates of Washington, would soon approach the neighboring city, it was desirable that a new post flag might flaunt its brilliant colors in the face of the coming foe. Realizing her part in the patriotic cause, Mrs. Pickersgill not only

She Fashioned the Flag Which Flew Over Fort McHenry, Her Young Daughter and Two Nieces Aiding in the Work—The Inspiration for Our National Anthem—Her Home in Which She Worked Is Still Standing and Is Now a Drug Store — The Task Was Completed in a Brewery—Flag Has Recently Been Presented to the National Museum — Historic Banner Adorned Gen. Washington's Tent.

set to work herself upon the great thirty-by-forty-foot ensign, but also pressed her young daughter and two nieces into service. They have told that so great was the haste for the flag that they frequently worked upon it until midnight.

The house which Mrs. Pickersgill owned and occupied at the time of making the flag still stands in lower Baltimore, at the corner of Pratt and Albemarle streets, in what was once a very good residence section of the city. Opposite Mrs. Pickersgill's smaller abode was the more ambitious town house of Charles Carroll of Carrollton, and from which, after ninety-six years of eminent usefulness, he was carried off by his last resting place, at Douglass Manor.

Mrs. Pickersgill's stanch little dwelling, yet to be restored and kept as a memorial of its time-honored past. As it is, the old yellow brick building, which was the scene of the creation of "The Star Spangled Banner," is now used as a drug store, and if not soon redeemed will fall into early decay, for the birds are even now pecking away at its gradually breaking bricks.

But for its being a corner house and having an additional window in both first and second stories, the Baltimore house in which "The Star Spangled Banner" was made is almost identical with the Betsy Ross house in Philadelphia, the accepted birthplace of "Old Glory."

It was in her large, second-story front room that Mrs. Pickersgill and her youthful assistants made the several parts of the flag. When they came to put it together they found the dimensions of the banner too extensive for the private room, and they carried it to the main room of a neighboring brewery, and there, laying it out upon the floor, they sewed the fifteen white stars, each measuring two feet from point to point, upon the blue field, and then attached the great field to the fifteen red and white stripes, which in that day was the regulation number of bars.

"It was a large piece of work," said Mrs. Sanderson, one of the nieces who lived to see the flag honored as it was carried through the streets during a celebration in 1880, "but we children were of patriotic zeal and made light of our task."

When completed, the flag was handed to the commander of Fort McHenry. It not hoisted on a high mast not far from the bastion facing the Patapsco river in the fort. The new flag did valiant duty as a target for British shells, for the bombardment was fierce, and in the attack one of the new stars was torn away.

But it served its noblest purpose when its "broad stripes and bright stars," more clearly discernible, doubtless, by their very newness, in the dawn's early light," inspired Francis Scott Key to write his immortal words as he sailed up the Patapsco on his return from rescuing his friend, Dr. Beanes of Maryland, who had been unjustly carried off as a prisoner by British soldiers.

When the flag had done full duty it was presented to Col. George Armistead, the defender of the fort. Through him it descended to his daughter, who became Mrs. William Stuart Appleton of Boston, and by her it was bequeathed to her son, Eben Appleton of New York, who lately presented it to the National



THE ORIGINAL "STAR SPANGLED BANNER," WHICH INSPIRED OUR NATIONAL ANTHEM. IT WAS RECENTLY PRESENTED TO THE NATIONAL MUSEUM.

Museum at Washington, where the people of Washington's tent at Fort McHenry might see it at will. This historic banner adorned Gen. Washington's tent at Fort McHenry, September 13, 1814, the tenth anniversary of the bombardment of Baltimore.

when Gen. Lafayette was the guest of honor at a reception given at the fort to celebrate its splendid resistance a century before.

The present flagstaff at Fort McHenry stands upon the identical spot it occupied when the flag was first raised. The United States government has placed a tablet upon it bearing the following inscription:

"The National ensign which inspired Francis Scott Key to write 'The Star Spangled Banner' was, during the bombardment of Fort McHenry, September 13, 1814, flying from a pole occupying this position."

The house which Francis Scott Key occupied in Georgetown when he served as attorney for the District of Columbia and made his room of the waters about Chesapeake bay in aid of his friend is demolished. It was his home to the last days of his life, but he died in 1854, while visiting his daughter in

Baltimore. Mrs. Charles Howard. He was buried in the Monumental city, but was later laid to rest in the cemetery near his home. There, beneath the shadow of the everlasting hills he loved, he lies beside his wife, who died in 1854. An appropriate monument, erected by the people of Frederick in 1898, marks the place.

Francis Scott Key was one of the many famous alumni of St. John's College, Annapolis. He was the author of numerous poems, and was a man of great force of beautiful thought and expression. It was from Key that the words were taken which appear upon our coinage as a national motto: "In God we trust."

He was a brilliant genius, a patriotic statesman—a man from whom his country is proud to have taken that burst of exultant patriotism inspired by his country's flag.

ZODIAC LOSES ITS POWERS

MOST persons have a hazy idea in regard to the zodiac, knowing after a fashion that it is a belt or zone, divided into twelve parts, each part ruled by the sign representing a constellation in the heavens. That is about as far as knowledge extends in this direction, though there are still many who hold to the belief that affairs of life are ruled by the signs of the zodiac.

For example, some old-fashioned gardeners still hold to the belief that seeds must be planted "when the sign is right," that fruit trees must only be pruned when a particular zodiacal sign is supposed to be dominant, etc.

These modern astronomers with their pesterful demands for absolute accuracy have also exploded another fondly cherished belief. They assert now, and back up the assertion with mathematical proof, that the pole star isn't actually the pole star at all, but that it is several celestial degrees off the mark. About eight centuries ago, they declare, Bolia, the pole star, actually occupied a spot in the heavens directly over the north pole. The movement of the earth, however, has caused the pole to swing away from the pole star until at present, if proceeded in its celestial journey far enough that it has wandered "away off the beat." That is, while the almanacs say the sun—and the solar system—enters a certain constellation, let us say, the actual entrance of the system into that sign does not occur until a full month later.

Of the present day, it seems, have not given a thought to this procession of the solar system, as they continue to chart the life of credulous individuals according to the "houses" that rule according to the ancient lore, these "houses" as a matter of fact being just a month out of the way.

This procession of the solar system would be directly above the pole star by several millions of miles. This isn't going to happen soon, because when the earth swings around to a point where the pole star is about three and a half degrees off the pole, the swing will carry it farther away from the pole star.

It is a fact, however, that the pole star has passed will the pole star again be a true indicator of the north pole.